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# "Once Upon a Mattress" Puts New Spin on Classic Fairy Tale

## Quick Facts

- "Once Upon a Mattress" will run Feb. 23-26 at 8 p.m. and Feb. 27 at 2 p.m. in Johnson Theatre.
- The musical debuted off- and then on Broadway in 1959.



*Jonathan Rider (from left), Jesse Powers, Cecily Bigham and Ted Patterson star in "Once Upon a Mattress."*

ROCK HILL, S.C. - A deceitful queen, a cursed king, a royal courtship derailed by countless schemes – "Once Upon a Mattress" isn't quite the fairy tale so many theatregoers recall from their childhoods.

Produced by Winthrop's [Department of Theatre and Dance](#) and the [Department of Music](#), "**Once Upon a Mattress**" is a sillier version of Hans Christian Andersen's "**The Princess and the Pea**." In this reimagination, which debuted off- and then on Broadway in 1959, the devious Queen Aggravain (played by **Cecily Bigham** of Merrimac, Mass.) conspires to prevent Princess Winifred (**Jesse Powers** of Sumter, S.C.) from marrying Prince Dauntless (**Ted Patterson** of Lexington, S.C.). Rendered mute by a curse, the queen's

husband, King Sextimus the Silent (**Jonathan Rider** of Sumter), is drawn into this mess of comedic misunderstandings and tries to thwart his wife's plots.

"**Once Upon a Mattress**," directed by [Stephen Gundersheim](#), assistant professor of theatre, features a cast of nearly 30 students. Nine students serve on the artistic/production staff along with several [College of Visual and Performing Arts](#) faculty members, including Katherine Kinsey, music director; Stacy McConnell, dance choreographer; Zinori Broñola, rehearsal accompanist; Biff Edge, technical director; Anna Sartin, scenic designer; Janet Gray, costume design; and Brenda Floyd, costume studio supervisor.

The production will run Feb. 23-26 at 8 p.m. and Feb. 27 at 2 p.m. in [Johnson Theatre](#). "**Once Upon a Mattress**" is an approved cultural event for Winthrop students. Tickets are \$15 for the public and \$10 with Winthrop I.D. **Seating is reserved.**

Contact the box office at 803/323-4014 or [boxoffice@winthrop.edu](mailto:boxoffice@winthrop.edu) to purchase tickets.

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